DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 456 719 HE 034 276

TITLE	Higher Education in the United Kingdom. Guide.
INSTITUTION	Higher Education Funding Council for England, Bristol.
REPORT NO	HEFCE-01/56
PUB DATE	2001-09-00
NOTE	25p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Higher Education Funding Council for England, Northavon House, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol, BS16 1QD, England. Tel: 0117-931-7317; Fax: 0117-931-7203; Web site: http://www.hefce.ac.uk.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Colleges; *Educational Finance; *Enrollment; Financial Support; Foreign Countries; *Institutional Characteristics; *Postsecondary Education; *Research
IDENTIFIERS	*United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

This booklet provides an overview of higher education in the United Kingdom. Higher education in the United Kingdom is rich and diverse, provided by many different types of organizations carrying out teaching, scholarship, and research. There are more than 1.8 million students in higher education in the United Kingdom, and 88% are from the United Kingdom, with another 5.5% from the European community. The majority of the 166 universities and colleges in the United Kingdom are in England. United Kingdom higher education funding bodies provide 5.1 billion British pounds for higher education, and an additional 5.1 billion British pounds comes from nongovernment funding. Other government agencies provide 2.6 billion British pounds for higher education. The report contains information about higher education in these chapters: (1) "The Nature of Higher Education"; (2) "Universities and Colleges"; (3) "Funding and Resources"; (4) "Who Studies at HEIs?"; (5) "Courses and Qualifications"; (6) "Research"; (7) "Quality and Standards"; (8) "Impact on the Economy"; (9) "Higher Education Institutions"; (10) "Useful Addresses"; (11) "Sources of Information"; and (12) "Education Structure and Glossary." (SLD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 456 719

September 01/56

Guide

Higher education in the United Kingdom

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R. Kier

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✔ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

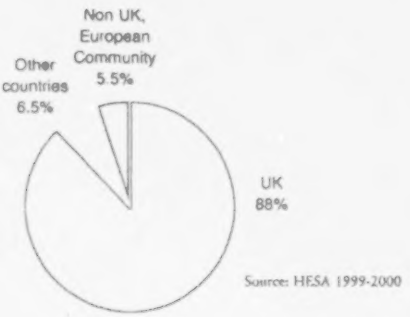
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Key facts about higher education

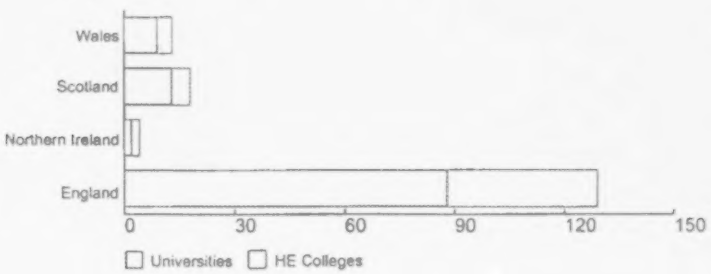
Students

Over 1.8 million HE students in UK higher education institutions*. Where do they come from?
There are also around 236,000 higher education students in further education colleges.



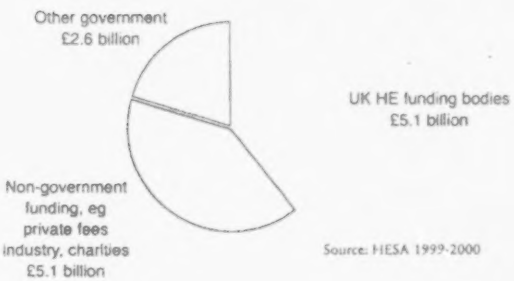
Institutions

166 universities and HE colleges in the UK



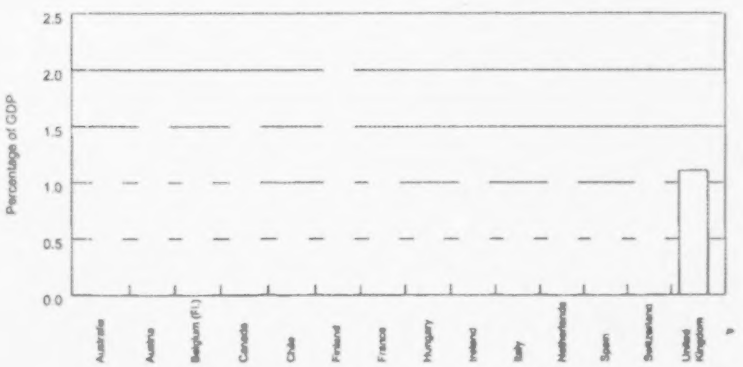
Sources of income

Universities and colleges receive £12.8 billion in funding. Where does it come from?


Other government £2.6 billion
UK HE funding bodies £5.1 billion
Non-government funding, eg private fees industry, charities £5.1 billion
Source: HESA 1999-2000

International comparisons

How much do we spend on HE compared to other countries (public expenditure on HE as a percentage of GDP - 1997)



Source: Education at a Glance (OECD 2000)

This guide relates to higher education in the UK. Most of the references are to higher education in universities and higher education colleges.

* Some of these students are studying by franchise at further education colleges.

Sources of data are explained on page 20.

Many of the issues in this publication are described in broad terms only. A list of organisations that can provide further information is given on page 18-19.

Higher education in the United Kingdom

Contents

Page

2 **The nature of higher education**

3 **Universities and colleges**

- universities
- colleges
- staff
- governance

5 **Funding and resources**

- the funding bodies and the Government
- tuition fees
- arrangements in Scotland
- arrangements in Northern Ireland
- student loans
- student support funding at higher education institutions

8 **Who studies at HEIs?**

- students in the UK
- the student experience
- international students
- how to get a place at university or college
- how to select a university or college

10 **Courses and qualifications**

- modularisation and credits
- postgraduate courses
- some examples of qualifications
- new PhD
- national qualifications framework
- professional and statutory bodies
- the Institute for Learning and Teaching

12 **Research**

- OST and research councils
- research in the arts and humanities
- science parks
- computer networks

14 **Quality and standards**

- quality assurance in higher education
- research assessment

15 **Impact on the economy**

- employment

16 **Higher education institutions**

18 **Useful addresses**

20 **Sources of information**

21 **Education structure and glossary**

The nature of higher education

Higher education in the UK is rich and diverse. It is provided by many different types of organisation, which carry out teaching, scholarship and research.

The main purposes of higher education are:

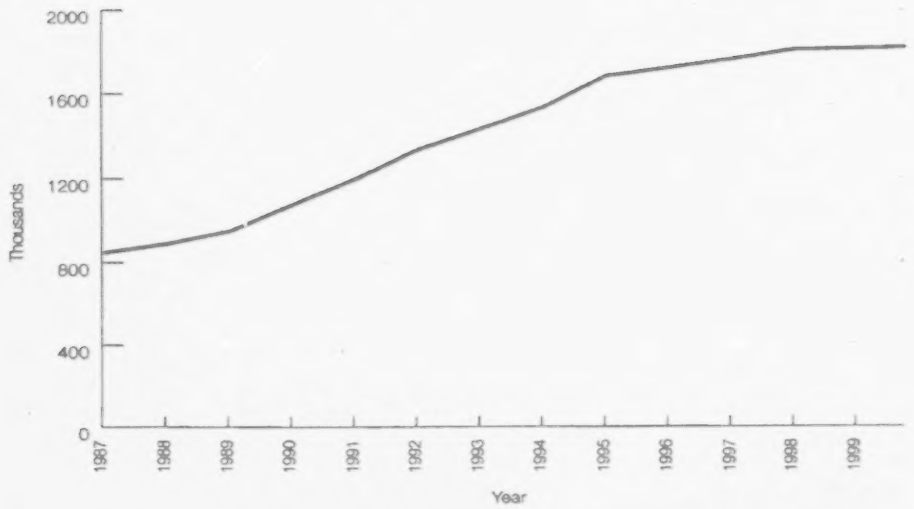
- to enable people to develop their capabilities and fulfil their potential, both personally and at work
- to advance knowledge and understanding through scholarship and research
- to contribute to an economically successful and culturally diverse nation.

The nature of higher education in the UK has changed significantly over the past 30 years. The number of students studying at universities and colleges has increased dramatically with over 1.8 students at higher education institutions today.

The age of undergraduates has changed too. Formerly these were largely school leavers studying full-time. The student population now includes large numbers of mature and part-time students.

Higher education is part of 'lifelong learning', which is not limited to the compulsory school years, but extends through an adult's working life and sometimes into retirement.

Growth in HE students



Source: DfES

HE students in UK higher education institutions

Universities and higher education colleges

Universities

Universities are diverse, ranging in size, mission, subject mix and history. They are self-governing and independent. In England, the older universities were established by Royal Charter or statute or Act of Parliament. The Privy Council has the power to grant university status to an institution which has the necessary characteristics.

Former polytechnics were given the status of universities under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. These are sometimes called 'new' universities, although many of them have their origins in vocational colleges that have a long history. The existing 'old' universities include many founded in the 1950s and 1960s, the 'civic' universities and the first colleges of the University of Wales, which were established in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The universities of Oxford and Cambridge date from the 12th and 13th centuries, and three Scottish universities, St Andrews, Glasgow and Aberdeen, have existed since the 15th century.

Universities have their own degree-awarding powers. They range in size from under 3,500 students (Cranfield University) to over 30,000 students (Manchester Metropolitan University). The combined schools and colleges of the University of London have around 100,000 students; and the Open University, whose part-time students study by distance learning, is even larger with over 150,000 students.

There is one entirely privately funded university – the University of Buckingham, which provides courses mainly in business, information systems and law.

Colleges

Higher education colleges also vary in size, mission, subject mix and history. Like universities, they are self-governing and independent. Some colleges were founded up to 150 years ago, and a significant number were established as church colleges. Some award their own degrees and other qualifications; in other colleges, qualifications are validated by a university or national accrediting body.

Higher education colleges with degree awarding powers can also apply to the Privy Council for the right to use the title of 'university college'.

Colleges range in size from small specialist institutions with as few as 140 students (Northern School of Contemporary Dance), to large multi-discipline institutions of 11,000 students (Southampton Institute). The average size of HE colleges in the UK is 3,500 students.

Many colleges cover a wide range of subjects, while some specialise in one or two areas, such as art and design, dance and drama, agriculture, or nursing.

	Universities	HE colleges
England	88*	42
Northern Ireland	2	2
Scotland	13	6
Wales	9†	4
Total	**112**	**54**

* 16 schools and institutes of the University of London are included in this total.

† University of Glamorgan plus eight constituent colleges and universities of the University of Wales

1 The Privy Council advises the Queen on the approval of Orders in Council including the granting of royal charters and incorporation of universities.

2 'Civic' universities were founded by Royal Charter in major cities in the 19th and early 20th centuries

6

Many further education colleges offer higher education courses, which are validated by a higher education institution or a national body such as Edexcel.

Several colleges provide teacher training as a major element of HE provision. In Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales these courses are funded by the higher education funding bodies. In England they are funded by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA).

Staff

Higher education institutions in the UK employ around 96,000 full-time and around 38,000 part-time academic staff. If all staff are included, the figure is estimated to be around 300,000. Academic staff in most universities, and in some colleges, carry out research as well as teaching. Most have doctorates and many have professional qualifications.

Pay scales are nationally negotiated for most university and college staff. There are currently separate pay scales for 'old' and 'new' universities [check before going to print]. In the old universities, conditions of employment (such as holidays) are negotiated locally. In the new universities, there is a national agreement covering conditions of employment.

Governance

Higher education institutions are legally independent. Their governing bodies are responsible for ensuring the effective management of the institution and for planning its future development. They are ultimately responsible for all the affairs of the university or college.

Funding and resources

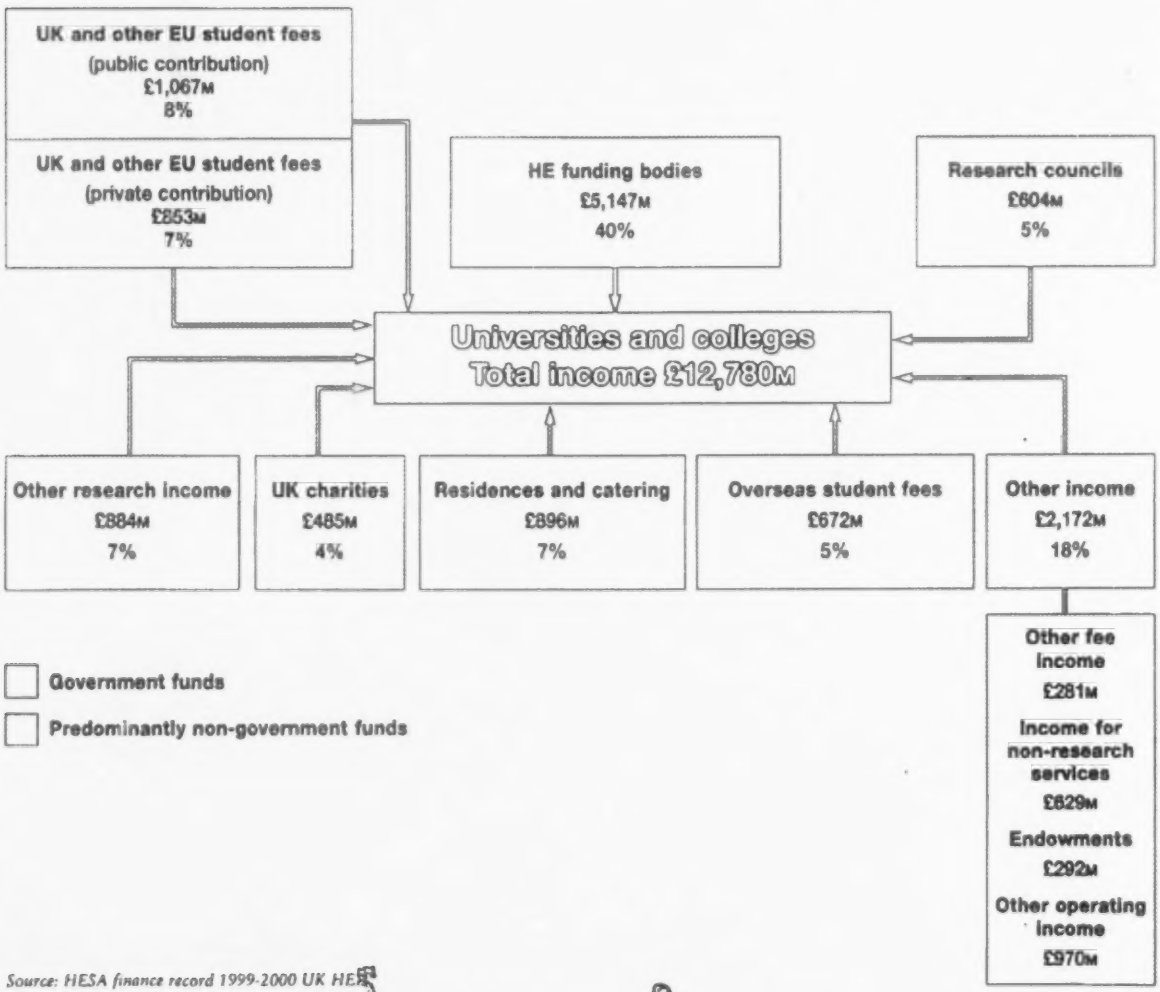
Total revenue for higher education in the UK was around £12.8 billion in 1999-2000. Around 60 per cent of this comes from UK or EU Governments.

The four UK funding bodies provide the largest amounts. They are the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC), and in Northern Ireland the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL). The funding bodies allocate most of their funds by formula for teaching and research.

The distribution of funds for teaching depends largely on the number of students and the subjects which an institution teaches. Nearly all funding for research is related to the quality and volume of research.

Universities and colleges also generate funds from a wide variety of private sources, such as sponsorship, fee-paying students, conferences and donations, and through providing services.

Sources of finance for universities and colleges


UK and other EU student fees (public contribution) £1,067M 8%
UK and other EU student fees (private contribution) £853M 7%
HE funding bodies £5,147M 40%
Research councils £604M 5%
Universities and colleges Total income £12,780M
Other research income £884M 7%
UK charities £485M 4%
Residences and catering £896M 7%
Overseas student fees £672M 5%
Other income £2,172M 18%
Other fee income £281M
Income for non-research services £629M
Endowments £292M
Other operating income £970M
Government funds
Predominantly non-government funds

Source: HESA finance record 1999-2000 UK HE

The funding bodies and the Government

The four UK higher education funding bodies are funded by and responsible to Parliament. Their role includes:

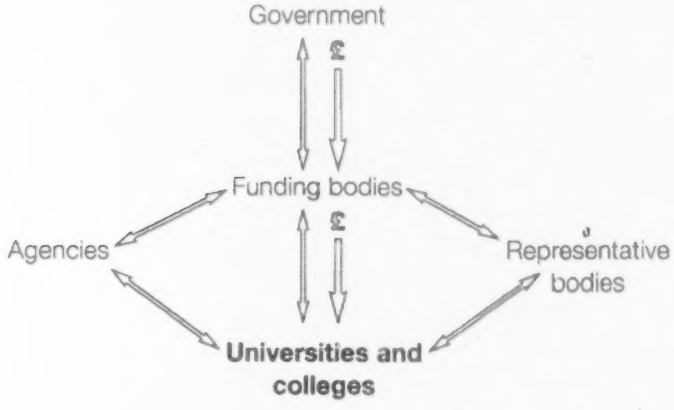
- allocating funds for teaching and research
- promoting high quality teaching and research
- widening access and increasing participation
- encouraging the development of interactions with business and the wider community
- advising Government on the needs of higher education
- informing students about the quality of higher education available
- ensuring the proper use of public funds.

The funding bodies work in partnership with other organisations such as the representative bodies (Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the UK universities, Committee of Scottish Higher Education Principals, Heads of Higher Education Wales, Standing Conference of Principals), the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, and the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

The total amount of money to be allocated is decided by central Government. Guidance and priorities are given by the Government but it is the sole responsibility of the funding bodies to allocate money to specific institutions. The funding bodies operate at arm's length from central Government.

The table below shows the relationship between central Government and the higher education funding bodies.

The funding councils in England, Scotland and Wales act as intermediaries between the Government and higher education institutions. As well as allocating funds to institutions, they provide advice and policy guidance to Government and promote good practice in the HE sector. In Northern Ireland the higher education institutions are funded directly by DEL on the advice of NIHEC.



England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales
Department for Education and Skills (DfES)	Northern Ireland Assembly	Scottish Executive	National Assembly for Wales
	Northern Ireland Higher Education Council (NIHEC) (advisory role)	Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Department (ELLD)	
Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)	Department for Employment and Learning (DEL)	Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC)	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW)

Tuition fees

It costs around £4,000 per year to provide an average undergraduate course. The Government meets most of this cost through the funding bodies. The arrangements are different in Scotland from the rest of the UK.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, undergraduate students from the UK and European Union (EU) on full-time higher education courses contribute up to a maximum of £1,075 per year in tuition fees (in 2001-02). To ensure that students are not prevented from entering higher education for financial reasons, students and their parents are assessed to determine their ability to pay. In 2001-02, 50 per cent of all full-time students will not have to pay any fees and only 35 per cent are expected to make the maximum contribution.

Universities and colleges are free to set the fee levels they charge to students from outside the EU. In 2000-01 the average fee was £6,765 for classroom-based undergraduate courses.

Students who have to find all or part of their fees themselves pay these directly to their university or college.

Arrangements in Scotland

Since autumn 2000, students studying in Scotland do not have to pay tuition fees if they live permanently in Scotland, or if they are from another EU country outside the UK. The fees are administered by the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS). After graduating, however, students in Scotland are expected to contribute £2,000 to the graduate endowment (unless exempt) in recognition of the benefits they gain from higher education and to provide similar opportunities for future generations of students.

The Scottish honours degree normally takes four years to complete. Students from elsewhere in the UK will not have to pay the fourth year tuition fee, so the cost of obtaining a first degree is the same throughout the UK.

Arrangements in Northern Ireland

As a result of a recent review of student finance in Northern Ireland, and subject to the current equality consultation, higher education access bursaries worth up to £1,500 will be introduced. These will be available from September 2002 for students from low-income families.

Student loans

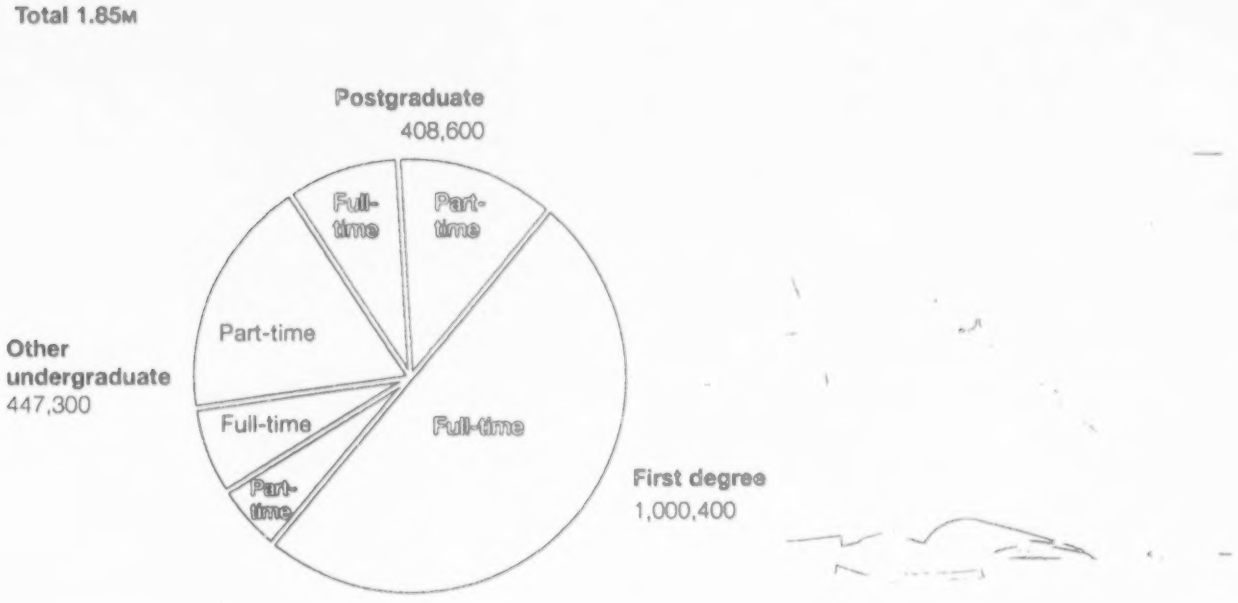
In addition to tuition fees, students have to pay for their living expenses; maintenance grants for students were phased out in 1998. Student loans are part of the Government's financial support package for UK students, and are available to help students meet their living costs while studying. The rate of repayment depends on the level of the person's income after graduation. Loans are provided by the Student Loans Company, or the Students Awards Agency in Scotland.

Student support funding

As well as the student support funding that is given directly to students via the Student Loans Company and local education authorities, in cases of financial hardship, students can also apply for funding from the institution which they attend. Funding is made available by the Government for this purpose and is distributed by institutions according to the rules and criteria laid down by the DfES. Full-time and part-time students can apply for funding in the forms of grants, bursaries and loans, to help cover living costs. Part-time students who meet the criteria may also be entitled to a fee waiver. In addition some students may be eligible for certain state benefits, including the Childcare Grants and other allowances.

Who studies at HEIs?

There are over 1.8 million higher education students in UK universities and colleges. They are split by mode (full-time or part-time) and level of study (undergraduate or postgraduate) as follows:



Source: HESA - '1999-2000 Student Record'

Students in the UK

There has been a small increase recently in the proportion of female to male students so that women now make up around 55 per cent of the student population. In the UK around 20 per cent of full-time first degree students are 21 or over when they start their course.

In addition there are over 60,000 students on further education courses at UK universities and HE colleges.

The level of participation in higher education by school leavers increased rapidly in the 1980s and early 1990s. Around 30 per cent of young people in England and Wales, 40 per cent in Scotland and 45 per cent in Northern Ireland take degree and other advanced courses in universities and other colleges. The long-term aim is that 50 per cent of 18 to 30 year olds in England will enter higher education by 2010.

Higher education should be accessible to all those who are able to benefit from it. The Government and the funding bodies are seeking to broaden access to and participation in higher education, so that equal opportunities are available for all, including people from ethnic minorities, people with special needs, and people from poorer socio-economic backgrounds.

International students

There are more than 200,000 students from overseas studying in the UK. They come from over 200 countries and represent almost 12 per cent of the student population. Forty-six per cent of these students come from European Union countries.

11

Where do international students come from?

A number of organisations provide support and advice to students from overseas. The British Council, which has offices in 110 countries, promotes UK education, encourages student mobility and offers a wide range of services to potential students in their own countries and while they are in the UK.

Student mobility is encouraged and promoted by the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (UK NARIC), which provides information and advice on the comparability of qualifications from different countries.

The Erasmus scheme is an EU-funded programme that promotes student mobility within the whole of Europe. About 100,000 students a year throughout Europe take part, around 10,000 are from the UK.

UKCOSA Council for International Education provides advice and information to students from overseas and to advisers and professionals in HE institutions who assist them. Universities and colleges also provide support services for overseas students on academic and other matters, and to help them adjust to life in Britain.

How to get a place at university or college

Most applications for full-time undergraduate higher education courses are made through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). Applications are usually made in the autumn, a year before the start of the course.

Applications for postgraduate courses, access courses, foundation degrees and part-time study are made directly to the university or college.

How to select a university or college

Potential students have a choice of over 42,000 higher education courses. Students therefore need accurate information to help them decide where to study.

Sources of information include: careers officers in schools and colleges, the UCAS Handbook and web-site, prospectuses, databases, videos and libraries. There is a wide range of resources available via the Internet including HERO, the official gateway site to the UK's universities, colleges and research organisations (www.hero.ac.uk).

The quality of courses in higher education institutions is externally assessed. Assessments are made against the aims and objectives set by the institution for their course. Since 1997, the programme of external assessments in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland has been organised by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). Scotland is now also subject to QAA reviews.

The results of assessments are published in print and on the internet. These offer potential students objective information on the courses they may wish to study, and the institutions that provide them.

Courses and qualifications

The normal minimum age for an undergraduate to start a course is 18, or 17 in Scotland. First degree courses generally take three years in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Sandwich courses, which include periods of practical work in organisations outside the university or college, usually last four years, as do certain specialist courses. Some vocational degrees are longer, for example in medicine, dentistry and architecture. In Scotland undergraduate programmes are offered both on a three-year basis, leading to a general degree, and on a four-year basis, leading to an honours degree.

The main undergraduate qualification awarded by higher education institutions is the first or bachelors degree, for example, BA, BSc or BEd. Other undergraduate qualifications include: Higher National Diploma (HND), Higher National Certificate (HNC) and Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE) which usually take one or two years to complete. Foundation degrees were launched in 2001; they take two years to complete and are mainly vocational.

Modularisation and credits

Higher education courses are increasingly being offered on a modular basis. Modular programmes allow students to build up their degree or other qualification by selecting self-contained modules. On completing a module the student is awarded a credit or credits. Students are awarded a degree after accumulating the appropriate number of credits in appropriate combinations.

Postgraduate courses

A high proportion of UK graduates go on to do further training after university – second only to Denmark, a recent study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) revealed.

Postgraduate courses are very varied. They can be taught, or conducted through research programmes, or a combination of both, and can be part or full-time. Qualifications include diplomas and certificates, such as the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE); masters degrees, for example Master of Science (MSc); and doctorates, for example, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

Postgraduate taught programmes usually last one year full-time or two years part-time. Research programmes normally last three

Some examples of qualifications

Undergraduate qualifications

Vocational Qualifications

Higher National Diploma (HND)

Higher National Certificate (HNC)

Foundation degrees

First degrees

Bachelor of Arts (BA)

Bachelor of Science (BSc)

Bachelor of Education (BEd)

Bachelor of Engineering (BEng)

Bachelor of Laws (LLB)

Bachelor of Medicine (MB)

Postgraduate qualifications

Diplomas and certificates

Postgraduate Diploma (PG Dip)

Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert)

Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)

Diploma in Social Work (DipSW)

Masters degrees

Master of Arts (MA)

Master of Science (MSc)

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Master of Laws (LLM)

Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

Doctorates

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

years for full-time students and over four years for part-time students. These normally require the student to complete a written thesis.

New PhD courses

In autumn 2001, an alternative to traditional PhD courses were introduced. The programmes will be completed over three to four years, and will combine a specific research project with a coherent programme of formal coursework in the chosen subject area and training in research. Students will also have the opportunity to develop the personal qualities and advanced skills necessary to make them attractive to prospective employers or enable them to enter an academic career. Ten universities have collaborated to develop the courses, which range from textiles to aircraft design and space structures.

National qualifications framework

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) introduced the national frameworks for higher education qualifications in January 2001. There is one framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland and one for Scotland. The frameworks provide clear and explicit standards for higher education qualifications, making them comparable across vocational and academic fields. Benchmark statements for degree subjects describe what can be expected of students in terms of intellectual skills, mastery of knowledge and conceptual understanding.

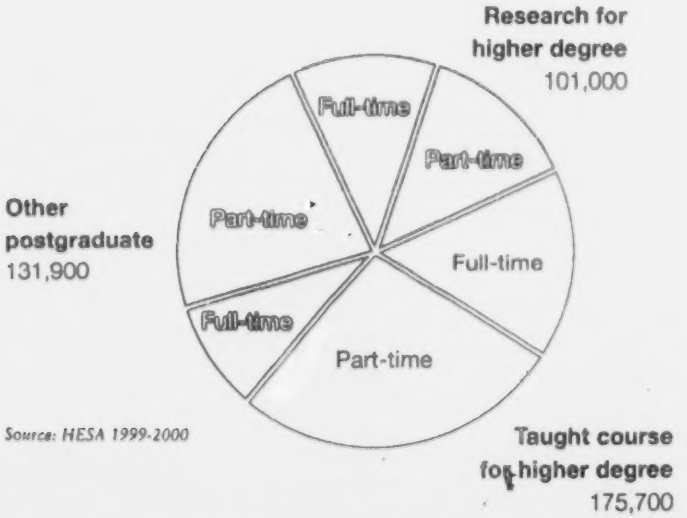
Professional and statutory bodies

In most academic areas, there are subject bodies that represent the academic and professional interests of their members. These organisations may be royal societies (for example, The Royal Society of Chemistry), chartered institutes (such as The Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers), or associations (such as the British Medical Association). In many cases – such as architecture, dentistry, medicine and law – people may only practise professionally if they pass the professional bodies' examinations. These courses may count towards professional qualifications.

Institute for Learning and Teaching

The Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILT) is the professional body for all who teach and support learning in higher education in the UK. It exists to enhance the status of teaching, improve the experience of learning, and support innovation. It also develops and maintains professional standards of practice. It is the main source of professional recognition for all staff engaged in teaching and the support of learning, who can achieve membership either by completing an accredited training programme or by individual admission based on experience and expertise.

Analysis of postgraduate students



Source: HESA 1999-2000

Research

Research in the UK is fundamental to the development of knowledge and understanding and to wealth creation. There is a strong tradition of research in all academic subjects.

A recent review of research policy and funding, revealed that on many measures the work done by university researchers in this country is among the best in the world. It showed that UK researchers are among the most productive, and the number of times the work of UK academics is read and used by other academics ('citation'), per million pounds spent, is the highest world-wide.

British researchers regularly win international prizes for their work. Most of Britain's long-term curiosity-driven and strategic research is carried out in universities.

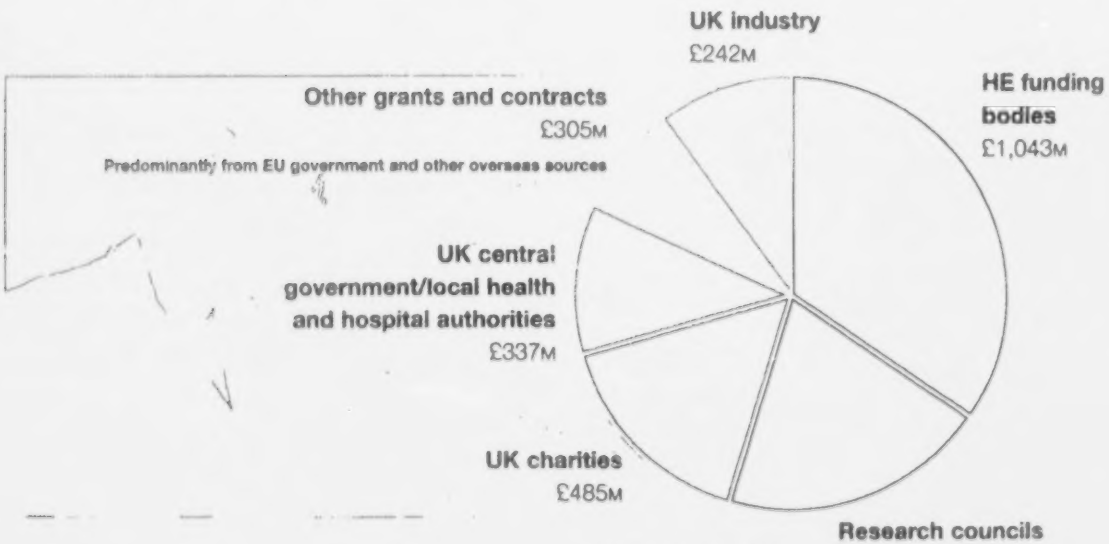
Many research students from overseas contribute to research in the UK. The Overseas Research Students Awards Scheme (ORSAS) grants are awarded on a competitive basis to international postgraduate research students of outstanding merit and research potential. The scheme is administered by Universities UK on behalf of the DfES.

Total funding for research in the UK in 2000-01 is over £2.8 billion. The public funding of research in universities and colleges is provided under the 'dual support system'. The funding for infrastructure (salaries of permanent academic staff, premises, central computing and library costs, for example) is supported by the four higher education funding bodies. This amounts to £1.3 billion in 2000-01. The direct costs of specific projects are provided by the six research councils and the Arts and Humanities Research Board, which allocate around £1.5 billion per year for research in universities and colleges. Other projects are supported by charities (foundations), industry, the European Union and UK government departments.

Over 90 per cent of research funding allocated by the funding councils is distributed selectively, according to the quality of research measured. One-third of the public money for research goes to just six universities. Research quality is assessed every few years through the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). Four research assessment exercises have been conducted so far: the most recent was in 1996, and the results of the current one will be published in December 2001.

Sources of research income

Total £3,016M



Source: HESA 1999-2000

15

The research councils and the Office of Science and Technology

The research councils fund projects in higher education institutions and in their own research institutes; and provide allowances for postgraduate research students. The research councils in turn receive their funding from the Office of Science and Technology (OST). The OST provides a co-ordinating role for project funding and makes allocations to the research councils, taking into account government policy such as the Foresight programme. This programme aims to improve the competitiveness of the UK economy, and to enhance the quality of life, by bringing together business, the science base and Government to identify and respond to emerging opportunities in markets and technologies.

Research in the arts and humanities

The Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB) was established in 1998 to carry out some of the functions of a research council for the arts and humanities. The AHRB provides funding and support for three programmes: advanced research; postgraduate research and training; and special funding for museums, libraries, galleries and collections.

Science parks

There are around 60 science parks in the UK where businesses are located usually on or near a university campus or major research centre. This gives the companies the opportunity to engage in collaborative research, professional training or other knowledge transfer. Most of these science parks have incubator units for start-up companies, or innovation centres. The parks house around 1,300 companies, mostly SMEs enploying over 26,000 people, engaged mainly in bio technology and computer science.

Computer networks

Higher education increasingly uses computer networks to support campus-wide, national and international activities.

The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), funded by all the HE and FE funding councils in the UK, provides JANET, the high-speed network connecting all the UK higher and further education communities. JANET links every higher education institution, the research councils and (most) further education colleges. It gives access to a wide range of electronic data sources including bibliographic datasets and electronic journals.

OST, with the funding councils, has launched an 'e-science' initiative to give UK researchers access to shared computing and visualisation facilities through a high speed network. This initiative, known as the 'GRID' is being developed via the JANET high-speed back-bone.

Local area networks (LANs) within institutions and metropolitan area networks (MANs) within urban areas allow electronic communications within and between neighbouring universities and colleges.

eUniversities

The eUniversities is a collaborative project by the UK higher education funding bodies to establish a new way of providing HE programmes through web-based training. The project will give UK higher education the capacity to compete globally with the major virtual and corporate universities being developed in the United States and elsewhere. The first courses will start in 2002.

The research councils

- Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)
- Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)
- Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- Medical Research Council (MRC)
- Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)
- Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC)
- Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils (CCLRC)

Quality and standards

The arrangements for assessing academic quality and standards in UK higher education are sophisticated and rigorous. A number of significant changes are about to be implemented.

Quality assurance in higher education

Currently, the main components of quality assurance are as follows:

Process	Undertaken by
internal quality assurance processes	the university or college including external examiners, and internal validation and review of programmes
institutional-level quality review	Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)
subject-level quality review	QAA
professional accreditation	professional and statutory bodies
research assessment	funding bodies using peer review

The QAA, currently undertakes institutional and subject quality reviews throughout the UK. It aims to promote improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in higher education, and to provide accessible and useful public information on HE. The current review programme covering all subject areas in all higher education institutions is scheduled for completion in December 2001. Thereafter, a new and more selective method of academic review will be introduced. The aim is to reduce the burden on institutions that have established a good track record at institutional and subject level, without reducing rigour and while ensuring that students parents, employers and others continue to have the information they need. The new method will focus on both the quality of teaching and on academic standards and will target review activity in areas where there are grounds for concern.

Research assessment

The purpose of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) is to provide ratings of the quality of research conducted in universities and colleges. The ratings are used to determine how research funding is allocated according to standards of international and national excellence, described through grades 5 star (highest) to 1 (lowest). Institutions conducting the best research receive a larger proportion of the grant.

The RAE is carried out every three to five years. The last one was in 1996; the results of the current exercise will be published in December 2001.

Assessment is by panels of, mostly academic, experts covering 68 different subject areas.

Impact on the economy

Higher education in the UK makes a substantial contribution to the economy in a range of ways: through the overall scale of institutions' turnover, by the provision of graduates and postgraduates, by delivery of expertise and continuing training opportunities for businesses, and by reaching out to business and the community via a spectrum of enterprising knowledge transfer processes. Much of this reflects the new 'third stream' of activity, alongside the traditional roles of teaching and research.

In England and Northern Ireland, the Higher Education Reach-out to Business and the Community fund, an HEFCE initiative supported by the Department of Trade and Industry and DEL, has awarded more than £82 million to HEIs over the period 2000 to 2004. From 2001 onwards this fund will be incorporated in a larger Higher Education Innovation Fund, and an extra £80 million has been made available for 2001-02 to 2003-04. A further £27 million has been set aside for the HE Active Community fund, to develop staff and student volunteering and work with the not for profit sector.

This money is provided to increase the capability of HEIs to respond to the needs of business and the wider community, where this will lead to wealth creation.

The impact of higher education on businesses includes consultancy, collaborative research and knowledge transfer, for example by licensing inventions to both large and smaller companies, and by founding start-up companies. These activities and direct working with local and regional communities all help to lever investment in wealth creation and improve the quality of life.

The annual turnover of UK higher education institutions is around £12.78 billion. It is estimated that every pound spent by higher education institutions generates around £2.2 for other sectors of the UK economy.

Employment

Around 1.1 per cent of the UK workforce is employed in higher education. Graduates make up about 25 per cent of the workforce. People who have higher education qualifications generally earn more than those who do not. For example, a survey showed salaries for graduates aged 33 are 12-18 per cent higher for men and 34-38 per cent higher for women than the salaries for non-graduates. About a fifth of graduates from full-time first degree courses go on to further study or training.

The Careers Services Unit (CSU) and careers offices in higher education institutions provide students and graduates with a range of careers guidance services.

Universities and higher education colleges in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Higher education institutions in the UK

Higher education institutions in England

Anglia Polytechnic University

Aston University

University of Bath

Bath Spa University College

University of Birmingham

Birkbeck College

Bishop Grosseteste College

Bolton Institute of HE

Bournemouth University

Arts Institute at Bournemouth

University of Bradford

University of Brighton

University of Bristol

Brunel University

Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College

University of Cambridge

Canterbury Christ Church University College

University of Central England in Birmingham

University of Central Lancashire

Central School of Speech and Drama

Cheltenham and Gloucester College of HE

Chester College of HE

University College Chichester

City University

Coventry University

Cranfield University

Cumbria College of Art & Design

Conservatoire for Dance & Drama

Dartington College of Arts

De Montfort University

University of Derby

University of Durham

University of East Anglia

University of East London

Edge Hill College of HE

Institute of Education

University of Essex

University of Exeter

Falmouth College of Arts

Goldsmiths College

University of Greenwich

Harper Adams University College

University of Hertfordshire

University of Huddersfield

University of Hull

Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine

Keele University

University of Kent at Canterbury

Kent Institute of Art & Design

King Alfred's College, Winchester

King's College London

Kingston University

Lancaster University

University of Leeds

Leeds Metropolitan University

University of Leicester

University of Lincoln

University of Liverpool

Liverpool Hope

Liverpool John Moores University

University of London

London Business School

London School of Economics & Political Science

London Guildhall University

London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

The London Institute

Loughborough University

University of Luton

University of Manchester

University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST)

Manchester Metropolitan University

Middlesex University

University of Newcastle upon Tyne

Newman College

University of North London

University College Northampton

Northern School of Contemporary Dance

University of Northumbria at Newcastle

Norwich School of Art & Design

University of Nottingham

Nottingham Trent University

The Open University

School of Oriental and African Studies

University of Oxford

* The Open University also operates in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Oxford Brookes University

School of Pharmacy

University of Plymouth

University of Portsmouth

Queen Mary, University of London

Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication

Royal Agricultural College

Royal College of Nursing Institute

University of Reading

College of Ripon & York

University of Surrey Roehampton

Rose Bruford College

Royal Academy of Music

Royal College of Art

Royal College of Music

Royal Holloway, University of London

Royal Northern College of Music

Royal Veterinary College

St George's Hospital Medical School

College of St Mark & St John

St Martin's College

St Mary's College

University of Salford

University of Sheffield

Sheffield Hallam University

University of Southampton

Southampton Institute

South Bank University

Staffordshire University

University of Sunderland

University of Surrey

Surrey Institute of Art and Design University College

University of Sussex

University of Teesside

Thames Valley University

Trinity & All Saints

Trinity College of Music

University College London

University of Warwick

University of Westminster

University of the West of England, Bristol

Wimbledon School of Art

University of Wolverhampton

University College Worcester

Writtle College

University of York

Higher education institutions in Scotland

University of Aberdeen

University of Abertay Dundee

University of Dundee

University of Edinburgh

Edinburgh College of Art

University of Glasgow

Glasgow Caledonian University

Glasgow School of Art

Heriot-Watt University

Napier University

Northern College of Education

University of Paisley

Queen Margaret University College

The Robert Gordon University

Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama

University of St Andrews

University of Stirling

University of Strathclyde

UHI Millennium Institute (UMI)

Higher education institutions in Wales

Cardiff University

University of Glamorgan

North East Wales Institute

Swansea Institute of Higher Education

Trinity College

University of Wales

University of Wales, Aberystwyth

University of Wales, Bangor

University of Wales, Lampeter

University of Wales, Swansea

University of Wales College of Medicine

University of Wales College, Newport

University of Wales Institute, Cardiff

Welsh College of Music and Drama

Higher education institutions in Northern Ireland

St Mary's University College

The Queen's University of Belfast

Stranmillis University College

University of Ulster

Useful addresses

Funding bodies

Higher Education Funding Council for England

Funds higher education at universities and colleges in England.

Northavon House
Coldharbour Lane
BRISTOL BS16 1QD
Tel 0117 931 7317
www.hefce.ac.uk

Higher Education Funding Council for Wales

Funds higher education in universities and colleges in Wales including teacher training.

Linden Court
The Orchards
Ilex Close
Llanishen
CARDIFF CF14 5DZ
Tel 029 2076 1861
www.elwa.ac.uk

Department for Employment and Learning

Funds education in Northern Ireland, including the two universities and two higher education colleges.

Adelaide House
39-49 Adelaide Street
BELFAST BT2 8FD
Tel 028 9025 7722
www.nics.gov.uk/hfe

Teacher Training Agency

Funds teacher training courses in England. Raises standards of teacher education and training, and promotes teaching.

Portland House
Stag Place
LONDON SW1E 5TT
Tel 020 7925 3700
www.teach-tta.gov.uk

Scottish Higher Education Funding Council

Funds higher education institutions in Scotland.

Donaldson House
97 Haymarket Terrace
EDINBURGH EH12 5HD
Tel 0131 313 6500
www.shefc.ac.uk

Learning and Skills Council

Responsible for post-16 education and training provision in England.

101 Lockhurst Lane
Foleshill
COVENTRY CV6 5SF
Tel 024 7686 2758
www.fefc.ac.uk

Government departments and offices

Department for Education and Skills

Responsible for education at all levels, training and employment opportunities in England.

Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
LONDON SW1P 3BT
Tel 020 7925 5000
www.dfee.gov.uk

Office of Science and Technology

Responsible for maintaining the excellence of science, engineering and technology in the UK, and improving public understanding of them. OST is part of the Department of Trade and Industry.

84-88 Albany House
Petty France
LONDON SW1H 9ST
Tel 020 7271 2000
www.dti.gov.uk/ost

Scottish Executive Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Department

Responsible for economic and industrial development, tourism, further and higher education, skills and lifelong learning.

Meridian Court
GLASGOW G2 6AT
Tel 0141 248 4774
www.scotland.gov.uk/who/elld

Representative bodies

Universities UK

Represents and promotes universities in the UK.

Woburn House
20 Tavistock Square
LONDON WC1H 9HQ
Tel 020 7419 4111
www.unversitiesuk.ac.uk

Standing Conference of Principals

Represents higher education colleges in England and Northern Ireland.

Woburn House
20 Tavistock Square
LONDON WC1H 9HB
Tel 020 7387 7711
www.scop.ac.uk

Higher Education Wales

Represents higher education institutions in Wales.

PO Box 413
CARDIFF CF10 3UF
Tel 029 2078 6216
www.hew.ac.uk

Universities Scotland

Represents higher education institutions in Scotland.

53 Hanover Street
EDINBURGH EH2 2PJ
Tel 0131 226 1111
www.universities-scotland.ac.uk

Other organisations

British Council

Promotes educational, cultural and technical co-operation between Britain and other countries.

10 Spring Gardens
LONDON SW1A 2BN
Tel 020 7930 8466
www.britcoun.org

UKCOSA: The Council for International Education

Provides advice and information to students from overseas and to advisers and professionals in HE institutions who assist them.

9-17 St Albans Place
LONDON N1 0NX
Tel 020 7226 3762
www.ukcosa.org.uk

HERO

The gateway to higher education in the UK, provides an up-to-date, accurate, and informative database of links to all the key HE web-sites on the internet.

www.hero.ac.uk

Higher Education Statistics Agency

Collects, analyses and reports on statistics for HE in the UK.

Queen Victoria House
18 Royal Crescent
CHELTENHAM GL50 3DA
Tel 01242 255577
www.hesa.ac.uk

Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

A professional body for staff who teach and support learning in HE in the UK.

Genesis 3
Innovation Way
York Science Park
Heslington
YORK YO10 5DQ
Tel 01904 434223
www.ilt.ac.uk

Joint Information Systems Committee

Stimulates and enables the cost-effective exploitation of information systems, and provides a high quality national electronic network for UK HE.

Northavon House
Coldharbour Lane
BRISTOL BS16 1QD
Tel 0117 931 7403
www.jisc.ac.uk

Northern Ireland Higher Education Council

Advises the DHFETE on the planning and funding of HE in Northern Ireland.

Adelaide House
39-49 Adelaide Street
BELFAST BT2 8FD
Tel 028 9025 7722

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

Promotes improvement in the quality and standards of HE provision and provides public information. It carries out institutional and subject reviews.

Southgate House
Southgate Street
GLOUCESTER GL1 1UB
Tel 01452 557000
www.qaa.ac.uk

Student Loans Company

Administers Government loans to students in the UK.

100 Bothwell Street
GLASGOW G2 7JD
Tel 0141 306 2000
www.slc.co.uk

Universities & Colleges Admissions Service

The UK central organisation through which applications are processed for entry to full-time undergraduate courses, HNDs and university diplomas.

PO Box 28
CHELTENHAM GL50 3SA
Tel 01242 222444
www.ucas.ac.uk

Sources of information

Sources of information

Inside front

International comparisons

Education at a glance 2000 Table B1.1c columns 1, 2 and 7.

HE students in FECs

HESA 'Higher education statistics for the UK' 1998-99 Table 0.

Page 2

Growth in HE students

Full-time HE students in UK HEIs: 1987-98 HE statistics for the UK Table 4; 1999 – provisional data from the HESA student record, December 1 HE students, writing up and sabbatical modes excluded.

Page 4

Staff

'Independent Review of Higher Education Pay and Conditions' 1999 (Bett report) Annex D Table 24 Analysis of staff by mode and terms of employment.

The numbers given are estimates of headcounts at 31 March 1998.

Page 5

Sources of finance for universities and colleges 1999-2000

HESA finance statistics return 1999-2000.

Page 8

Student numbers

HESA 1999-2000 student record.

Percentage of young people entering HE

Office for National Statistics UK 2002: The Official Yearbook of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Page 9

Number of courses

UCAS handbook and web-site.

Page 12

Sources of research income

HESA finance statistics return 1999-2000.

Page 13

Information on Science Parks from the UK Science Park Association.

Page 15

Impact on the economy

The multiplier was taken from 'The Impact of Universities and Colleges on the UK Economy', report for Universities UK 1997.

Employment

'Higher education in the learning society' report to the National Committee of Inquiry into HE chaired by Sir Ron Dearing, July 1996-97, the DTIR regional competitiveness indicators and the HESA First Destination Survey 1999-2000.

Education structure and glossary

Education structure

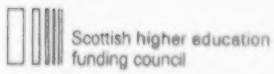
		Further education	Higher education	
Pre-school	Compulsory school education	6th form		
			Lifelong learning	
3-4	5-16	16-18	18+	21+

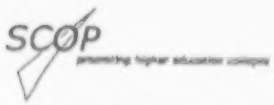
Higher education courses are generally above the standard of GCE A-levels or National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3. They include degree courses, postgraduate courses and Higher National Diplomas. Higher education takes place in universities and higher education colleges, and in some further education colleges.

Further education is for people over compulsory school age (currently 16 years). Further education courses are generally up to the standard of GCE A-level or NVQ Level 3 and take place in a sixth-form college or a higher education institution rather than in a secondary school.

Photographs used in this guide were kindly supplied by the University of the West of England, Bristol.

24





Office of Science and Technology

Higher Education Funding Council for England
Northavon House
Coldharbour Lane
BRISTOL
BS16 1QD

tel 0117 931 7317
fax 0117 931 7203
www.hefce.ac.uk